

Serial No.:09/465,298

In the Claims

Complete listing of claims:

1. (previously amended) A nonwoven laminate comprising:

a first layer having a first side and a second side, said first layer comprising a nonwoven web of multicomponent fibers having a first polymeric component and a second polymeric component in distinct zones across the cross-section of the fibers which extend substantially continuously along the length of the fibers, said multicomponent fibers having an average fiber diameter less than about 7 micrometers;

a second layer proximate the first side of said first layer, said second layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers;

a third layer proximate the second side of said first layer, said third layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers; and

wherein said layers are bonded together to form a multilayer laminate having a hydrohead of at least 50 mbars, a Frazier air permeability in excess of 70 cubic feet/minute/square foot and a cup crush energy less than 2150 g-mm.

2. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 1 wherein said first layer comprises a nonwoven web of autogenously bonded fibers.

3. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 1 wherein said first layer comprises a nonwoven web of meltblown fibers.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (canceled)

7. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 1 wherein at least one component in each of said first, second and third layers comprises a propylene polymer and further wherein said multilayer laminate has a cup crush energy less than 2050 g-mm.

Serial No.:09/465,298

8. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 1 wherein at least one component in each of said first, second and third layers comprises an ethylene polymer and further wherein said multilayer laminate has a cup crush energy less than 2050 g-mm.
9. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 1 wherein said laminate has a Frazier air permeability in excess of 100 cubic feet/minute/square foot.
10. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 3 wherein the first polymeric component of said multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises a propylene polymer having a crystallinity above 70 J/g and further wherein the second polymeric component of said meltblown fiber web comprises an amorphous polyalphaolefin having a crystallinity below about 65 J/g.
11. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 3 wherein said second and third spunbond layers are extensible and further wherein the first polymeric component of said multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic polyolefin and wherein said second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic polymer.
12. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 11 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic polyolefin.
13. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 11 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises a blend of a polyolefin and a non-olefin thermoplastic elastomer.
14. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 11 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic non-olefin thermoplastic elastomer.
15. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 11 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises a block copolymer having a styrenic moiety end block and an elastomeric mid-block.
16. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 3 further comprising a fourth layer comprising a nonwoven web of monocomponent polypropylene meltblown fibers and further wherein said fourth layer is located between said second and third layers and adjacent said first layer.

Serial No.:09/465,298

17. (previously amended) The nonwoven laminate of claim 16 wherein the first polymeric component comprises a crystalline propylene polymer and wherein the second polymeric component comprises an amorphous propylene polymer.

18. (withdrawn)

19. (withdrawn)

20. (withdrawn)

21. (withdrawn)

22. (withdrawn)

23. (withdrawn)

24. (new) A nonwoven laminate comprising:

a first layer having a first side and a second side, said first layer comprising a nonwoven web of multicomponent meltblown fibers having a first polymeric component and a second polymeric component in distinct zones across the cross-section of the fibers which extend substantially continuously along the length of the fibers, said multicomponent meltblown fibers having an average fiber diameter less than about 7 micrometers;

a second layer proximate the first side of said first layer, said second layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers;

a third layer proximate the second side of said first layer, said third layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers; and

wherein the first polymeric component of said multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises a propylene polymer having a crystallinity above 70 J/g and further wherein the second polymeric component of said meltblown fiber web comprises an amorphous polyalphaolefin having a crystallinity below about 65 J/g and wherein said layers are bonded together to form a multilayer laminate.

Serial No.:09/465,298

25. (new) A nonwoven laminate comprising:

a first layer having a first side and a second side, said first layer comprising a nonwoven web of multicomponent meltblown fibers having a first polymeric component and a second polymeric component in distinct zones across the cross-section of the fibers which extend substantially continuously along the length of the fibers, said multicomponent meltblown fibers having an average fiber diameter less than about 7 micrometers;

a second layer proximate the first side of said first layer, said second layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers;

a third layer proximate the second side of said first layer, said third layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers; and

wherein wherein said second and third spunbond layers are extensible and further wherein the first polymeric component of said multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic polyolefin and wherein said second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic polymer and wherein said layers are bonded together to form a multilayer laminate.

26. (new) The nonwoven laminate of claim 25 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic polyolefin.

27. (new) The nonwoven laminate of claim 25 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises a blend of a polyolefin and a non-olefin thermoplastic elastomer.

28. (new) The nonwoven laminate of claim 25 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises an elastic non-olefin thermoplastic elastomer.

29. (new) The nonwoven laminate of claim 25 wherein the second component of the multicomponent meltblown fiber web comprises a block copolymer having a styrenic moiety end block and an elastomeric mid-block.

Serial No.:09/465,298

30. (new) A nonwoven laminate comprising:

a first layer having a first side and a second side, said first layer comprising a nonwoven web of multicomponent meltblown fibers having a first polymeric component and a second polymeric component in distinct zones across the cross-section of the fibers which extend substantially continuously along the length of the fibers, said multicomponent meltblown fibers having an average fiber diameter less than about 7 micrometers, said first layer further comprising a nonwoven web of monocomponent polypropylene meltblown fibers;

a second layer proximate the first side of said first layer, said second layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers;

a third layer proximate the second side of said first layer, said third layer comprising a nonwoven web of continuous bicomponent spunbond fibers having an average fiber diameter greater than about 10 micrometers; and

wherein said layers are bonded together to form a multilayer laminate.

31. (new) The nonwoven laminate of claim 30 wherein the first polymeric component comprises a crystalline propylene polymer and wherein the second polymeric component comprises an amorphous propylene polymer.